Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 FSI-04 VO-03 PPTE-00 PER-05 SY-05 A-01 CA-01 MMO-01 /037 W

-----075294 230346Z/14

R 221300Z AUG 78 FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1557

UNCLAS LIBREVILLE 2291

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: CASC, GB

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY AFTER-HOURS SERVICES

REF: STATE 201217

1. EMBASSY IS FULLY AWARE OF RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY AFTER-HOURS SERVICES TO AMERICAN CITIZENS, AND WE ARE SATISFIED THAT OUR SYSTEM IS BEST WE CAN DEVISE WITH AVAILABLE PERSONNEL. DUTY PERSONNEL HAVE ALWAYS IN PAST RESPONDED TO EMERGENCY REQUESTS AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

2. OUR SYSTEM DOES HAVE INHERENT WEAKNESS, HOWEVER, IN THAT AFTER-HOURS CALLS ARE HANDLED BY MARINE SECURITY GUARDS, WHO MAY OR MAY NOT BE ABLE HANDLE CALLS IN FRENCH LANGUAGE. DEPARTMENT'S SOLUTION (PARA 2 (C) REFTEL) THAT PERSON HANDLING CALL SHOULD EITHER SPEAK BOTH LANGUAGES OR HAVE AVAILABLE SOMEONE TO HANDLE SECOND LANGUAGE IS NO ANSWER. THIS WOULD REQUIRE EITHER THAT MSGS HAVE SUFFICIENT COMMAND OF FRENCH LANGUAGE BEFORE ARRIVAL AT POST TO COPE WITH CALLS THEMSELVES OR THAT WE HIRE BILINGUAL NIGHT SWITCHBORAD OPERATOR/RECEPTIONIST. AT SMALL POST WHERE NUMBER OF AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY CALLS MAY TOTAL HALF DOZEN PER YEAR, WITH PERHAPS TWO IN FRENCH, THERE IS NO WAY WE COULD JUSTIFY HIRING SUCH UNCLASSIFIED

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AN EMPLOYEE OR EMPLOYEES, EVEN IF WE WERE GIVEN AN APPROVED POSITION. RECORDING IS NOT ANSWER EITHER, SINCE NOT ALL DUTY OFFICERS HAVE TELEPHONE OR TELEPHONES THAT WORK, AND THERE LITTLE CHANCE WE CAN CORRECT PROBLEM PERMANENTLY.

3. AT PRESENT, MSGS CAN REACH SOMEONE WITH FRENCH

LANGUAGE CAPABILITY IN MATTER OF MINUTES, BUT, IF DEPARTMENT HAS SOME OTHER PROPOSED SOLUTION, WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO HEAR OF IT. TIENKEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X Capture Date: 01 jan 1994 Channel Indicators: n/a

Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Concepts: n/a Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note: Disposition Action: n/a

Disposition Approved on Date: Disposition Case Number: n/a Disposition Comment: Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960 Disposition Event: Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LIBREV02291
Document Source: IDR

Document Unique ID: 00

Drafter: n/a Enclosure: n/a Executive Order: N/A Errors: N/A

Expiration: Film Number: D780344-0195 Format: TEL

From: LIBREVILLE Handling Restrictions: n/a

Image Path: ISecure: 1

Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780838/aaaabfna.tel

Line Count: 65 Litigation Code IDs: Litigation Codes:

Litigation History: Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM Message ID: 117c635f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc Office: ACTION SCS

Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a

Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a Reference: 78 STĂTE 201217

Retention: 0

Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED Review Content Flags:

Review Date: 13 jul 2005 **Review Event:** Review Exemptions: n/a **Review Media Identifier:** Review Release Date: n/a Review Release Event: n/a **Review Transfer Date:** Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a

SAS ID: 1663141 Secure: OPEN Status: NATIVE

Subject: EMERGENCY AFTER-HOURS SERVICES

TAGS: CASC, AFSP, GB To: STATE

Type: TE

vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/117c635f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc

Review Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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